

**Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Eisenhower Junior High School
4351 South Redwood Road
Taylorsville, Utah 84123**

April 21-22, 2005



Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
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Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Eisenhower Junior High School
4351 South Redwood Road
Taylorsville, Utah 84123**

April 21-22, 2005

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, April 21-22, 2005, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Eisenhower Junior High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Nancy Jadallah is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Eisenhower Junior High School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at Eisenhower Junior High School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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EISENHOWER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

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Dona Harris Assistant Principal
Tom Gatten Intern Assistant Principal

Counseling

Bess Brown Counselor
Nick Young Counselor
Tom Young Counselor
Laney Long Intern Counselor

Support Staff

Student Support

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Becky Doersman
Connie Lively
Stephanie Williams

Cafeteria

Debra Baldwin
Stephanie Diggs
Barbara Matthews
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Karen Snellman
Melodie Stevenson
Laurie Stout-Letz
Alison Taylor
Larry Wilde
Malamene Wong

EISENHOWER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Eisenhower Junior High's mission is to provide a respectful and safe learning environment and assist students in reaching their potential and becoming:

- Effective Communicators
- Responsible Individuals
- Creative Problem Solvers
- Collaborative/Team Players

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe:

- Teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and the community share the responsibility of advancing the school's mission statement.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique, social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs.
- A safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning and promotes a positive school climate.
- Student learning is the chief priority for our school.
- The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if we want our students to become responsible citizens and self-directed, lifelong learners.
- Curriculum and instructional practices should incorporate a variety of learning activities and strategies to meet the different learning methods and needs of our students.
- Maintaining high expectations for all students can lead to higher achievement.
- Students need to be provided with the opportunities to continually learn and practice core values, school skills, and life skills across all settings.
- Through teaching, modeling and training our students can learn to be contributing citizens in our society.

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Catherine Jensen, Jordan School District, Visiting Team Chairperson

Elizabeth Lewis, South Hills Middle School, Jordan School District

Beverly Stout, Elk Ridge Middle School, Jordan School District

Betsy Hunt, Longview School, Murray School District

Stacy Thackeray, South Hills Middle School, Jordan School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

EISENHOWER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Eisenhower Junior High School is located in Taylorsville, Utah, in the heart of the Salt Lake Valley. Once a very rural area, Taylorsville has become more and more urban, with apartment complexes filling the open space. The school opened in 1974, and was named after Dwight D. Eisenhower, a five-star general and the 34th President of the United States. The demographics of the school have changed dramatically over the past five years: The number of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch has increased from 28 percent to 52 percent, the number of ethnic minority students has increased to above 30 percent, and students being served in English as a Second Language have increased from 11 percent to 27 percent. Eisenhower Junior High has a strong, cohesive faculty. The staff is aware of the demographic changes at the school and is sincerely attempting to respond in positive, proactive ways. The school has implemented teaming in the seventh and eighth grades and has gone to an eight-period block schedule this year. The school has made efforts to implement middle level philosophies and practices. It has participated in the Urban School initiative and the Utah Behavior Initiative program. The self-study has given the school the opportunity to bring all the programs together with one focus.

a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?*

The significant findings revealed by the school's analysis of its profile included:

- Students are performing in an inverted bell curve. Forty percent of the students are high performing, receiving 3.5 and above, and 40 of the students are failing.
- The ethnic diversity of the school is increasing dramatically.
- Sixty percent of the students are below grade level on reading.
- The socioeconomics of the school population is changing, as indicated by the increased number of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch.

b) *What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

The school must develop a systematic data collection system to provide longitudinal and comparative data. Disaggregation of the data should be used to inform the school of who is learning and who is not learning. From this information, the school should explore why these students are or are not learning. Programs and instructional practices must be evaluated for effectiveness.

The Visiting Team recommends the development of common assessments within departments. Teachers within the departments must come together to clarify the most important learning outcomes for students in a particular course and develop common assessments to evaluate the success of instructional practices to reach those outcomes. All students must have equal opportunity to learn those essential skills regardless of which teacher within the department they have. Focus must shift from teaching to student learning and must be equitable for all students.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Collect longitudinal, multi-year data.
- Gather course-specific data on common assessments developed collaboratively around essential learning.
- Use data to inform effectiveness of programs.

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

The Visiting Team commends the school community for its efforts to engage in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students. All aspects of the process have been completed in a thorough and collaborative manner. All faculty members have participated on focus group committees. A few members of the classified staff have been members of the Community Council and focus groups. Parents have been invited to participate, with limited success. Those parents who have participated feel that the process is valuable and has resulted in a good school improvement plan. A cross-section of students has been organized to form a student focus group to address their views on the effectiveness of the school.

Staff members have expressed their appreciation of the collaborative process. They acknowledge the process was very time consuming and difficult, yet they recognize how valuable the process has been to the school community. They realize that the process is unifying and giving a focus to their collective efforts on behalf of students. The many different programs in which they have been engaged are now being evaluated for alignment with the school's mission and action plan. Many staff members describe the accreditation process as "bringing it all together."

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The school has made a genuine effort to accurately reflect its current strengths and limitations through the self-study. Much of the data collected has validated the impressions the staff has had of the current reality. Other data is a bit surprising and worthy of further inquiry.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Eisenhower Junior High School is committed to assisting its students in becoming:

1. **Effective Communicators**
An effective communicator is a student who can successfully interact with others through a variety of methods, including reading, writing, listening and speaking. An effective communicator is a student who:
 - Selects and utilizes appropriate methods and modes of communication
 - Identifies and adapts communication to his or her audience
 - Receives and understands communication of ideas through different mediums
2. **Responsible Individuals/Citizens**
A responsible individual/citizen is a student who participates in his or her smaller community and world community to promote both personal and public growth. A student who is personally and socially responsible achieves this by:
 - Identifying and utilizing appropriate strategies to solve conflicts
 - Balancing work and leisure activities
 - Identifying and respecting individuals' rights and property
 - Understanding and promoting the democratic principles of freedoms, justice and equality
3. **Creative Problem Solvers**
A creative problem solver is a student who has acquired a variety of thinking and processing skills and who can use these skills in multiple situations. A creative problem solver is a student who:
 - Identifies and utilizes a variety of thinking skills
 - Interprets, organizes and manages new information
 - Predicts outcomes and consequences when making decisions

4. Collaborative Team Players
- A collaborative team player is a student who can work effectively with others and identify and achieve specific goals and obtain specific results. A collaborative team player is a student who:
- Identifies and balances personal and group goals
 - Can make smooth transitions between group roles
 - Treats team members with respect and compassion

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

Eisenhower Junior High has engaged in a collaborative process to build a shared vision that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school. The school community was reflective in its efforts to determine what was emblematic to Eisenhower, and has determined that helping students reach their potential in a safe learning environment is the school's most important work. The process included teachers and administrators, as well as some input from students and parents. Efforts were made to include parents, with limited success. Those parents who did participate were supportive of the process and felt the school staff was better equipped to make decisions than they. Students were included when appropriate.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The school's stakeholders have worked collaboratively to define a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success. The school's belief statements address key issues pertinent to school improvement efforts.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs). The beliefs state the purpose of the school as student learning. The beliefs commit the school to continuous improvement and best practices on behalf of student learning. Students know the DRSLs and understand why they are important. The DRSLs are beginning to drive the work of the school.

Next should come specific steps to teach the DRSLs, refine indicators of success, and assess for success. The school must continue to be committed to the purpose

of the school as student learning, and make the shift from focusing on teaching to focusing on learning. Periodic common assessments must be developed to inform instructional practice.

Curriculum Development:

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

Individual departments are working together to ensure that the curriculum is based on the State Core. Many individuals within the departments have attended professional development courses geared toward the Backward Design model, and they are using this model within their teams to ensure that the scope and sequence of the class are based on the standards and objectives contained in the core. Teachers first teach what is in the core, and then they teach what they enjoy or find a way to incorporate it into the core.

The staff also indicated that individual “pods” or teams met routinely to discuss integration between science, social studies and language arts. The Visiting Team understands that the teams are at different stages in their development and recommends that the faculty continue the current efforts toward integration within the teams. Staff members also indicated the need for differentiation to meet the needs of the current student population. The Visiting Team suggests that time should be set aside for collaboration within the departments in order for the departments to more effectively determine curriculum goals and to develop and implement common assessment practices.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

The staff members are in the early stages of actively incorporating the desired results for student learning (DRSLs) within their classrooms. The staff members indicated that they utilize cooperative groups to foster communication, problem solving, and collaboration, and have implemented the Utah Behavior Initiative and a life skills program to foster responsible citizenship. They also indicated that many professional development opportunities have been made available to support the needs of the student body. The staff has made a continual effort to reinforce the DRSLs by using the vocabulary of the DRSLs within the classroom. Time is spent within the classroom revisiting the DRSLs and reinforcing what they look like and what each student should be doing. The staff has developed a rubric to identify what the DRSLs look like and is in the process of fully implementing them into the curriculum. The Visiting Team encourages the school to refine the instructional practices centered on the DRSLs.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

In addition to much traditional instruction, teachers at Eisenhower Junior High both individually and collaboratively design a variety of learning experiences to engage students. Seventh and eighth grade teams meet regularly to make decisions regarding curriculum and strategies for student learning. Several teachers of ninth graders also integrate curricula and share teaching methods. Types of instructional strategies observed included direct instruction/lecture, independent student exploration of topics, collaborative exploration of a topic, classroom discussion, laboratory activities, use of overhead projectors and LCD projectors, peer instruction, cooperative learning groups, and hands-on activities. Teachers reported hosting visiting experts, and a group of ninth grade students was away on a field trip at the beginning of the visit. The Visiting Team suggests that individual departments at Eisenhower Junior High explore strategies to utilize in common for increased student achievement.

- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

The Visiting Team observed educational professionals utilizing a variety of teaching strategies to address multiple learning styles. Several educational professionals use interpretation of data to make decisions regarding instructional strategies, adjusting or modifying the instructional process to meet individual students' needs. Mainstreamed English-learning students receive help from adult aides, and teachers modify strategies and expectations to assure their success. An extensive software program is in place in a computer lab to assist students with learning English. Where special education students are mainstreamed, adult aides assist teachers in adapting instruction and modifying expectations. The Visiting Team recommends that teachers continue self-reflection and carefully analyze achievement data to determine best practices for differentiated instruction.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

According to Visiting Team observations and interviews, most of the professional staff members make themselves available to provide additional help for students before and after school. Additionally, the media center serves as a "Skill Center" before and after school, where students may use computers to work on assignments (typing or researching on the Internet). A math teacher is available to track students and mentor those who are experiencing difficulties in math. Remediation classes are offered after school and during the summer. A 21st Century grant provides for a Science Club, Fantasy and Science Fiction Club,

MESA, and a variety of additional enrichment activities. Students from Salt Lake Community College provide additional mentoring/tutoring and classroom presentations. This school also receives support from volunteers from the surrounding community. The Visiting Team recommends that Eisenhower teachers continue to explore and implement on a consistent basis opportunities for students to receive additional assistance to improve their learning.

Quality Assessment Systems:

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or schoolwide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

Clearly articulated expectations for student achievement have been identified school-wide with the DRSLs. Data from standardized testing is being used to measure school improvement so that expectations are clearly defined for faculty and students. Results are evident, as in the school-wide “in and out” paragraph writing assessment to develop written communication skill on all grade levels. Some classes are using measures beyond paper-and-pencil tests for problem solving and responsible citizenship. The” 200 Club” and the orange vest hall pass are performance indicators. The Visiting Team recommends that the faculty continue the process of identifying/developing such instruments, thereby providing needed feedback for successful implementation of the DRSLs.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

It is clear to the Visiting Team that the faculty is in the beginning stages of developing formal and informal assessment and using this data to direct instruction. There is also strong evidence that this faculty realizes the importance of using multiple assessments in evaluating student performance. Individualization and differentiation are taking place in some classes, and will be strengthened by expanding the conversations among administration, faculty, students regarding who is not learning in the school and why.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

The Visiting Team is confident that the faculty is committed to fair and equitable assessment of student performance. Both formal and informal assessments are used in most departments to obtain fair measurement of student performance. There is a strong desire among the administration and staff to receive and utilize timely and accurate data in order to better serve the needs of all students. As the staff continues to utilize multiple assessments, refine the process of concisely identifying performance standards, and align appropriate assessment instruments to those standards, equity and fairness are further guaranteed.

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The school leadership has established an academic learning climate in which teaching and learning are supported. Teachers are beginning to make the transition from focusing on what they do in teaching to what students are able to do because they have learned. The necessary climate is established to continue this paradigm shift. The focus of the school is shifting from program implementation to success in reaching clear instructional goals. The leadership has taken the steps to bring into focus the many initiatives and programs that have been implemented to support increased student achievement.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

The school leadership is beginning to employ data-driven decision making. The school is fairly new to data collection with limited longitudinal information. As the school gains expertise in data collection, the Visiting Team expects the school leadership to use the data for decision making. The school leadership is well versed in research-based best practices and is making every effort to instruct the staff on those practices. The school leadership is skilled in the collaborative process and works to include all stakeholders in discussion and reflection on the work of the school. The collaborative process allows the school improvement efforts to be “owned” by the entire school community.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

The school leadership has begun efforts to monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness. Some assessments have been implemented school-wide to inform staff members of the specific skills of students. Next steps include departments and integrated teams working to clearly define expected learning outcomes and develop common assessments with performance standards. They can then use this information to reflect on instructional practices and develop effective interventions when students don't learn.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

The school leadership is effective in its allocation of resources based on a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

Decisions appear to be made in alignment with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

The school leadership has worked to empower the school community through a collaborative effort on behalf of student learning. All staff members have been included in the shared responsibility. Great efforts have been made to include parents, with limited success. Plans are in place to continue those efforts. The school community shows a commitment to continuous school improvement.

Community Building:

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

Positive and productive working relationships are established among the students, teachers, support staff, and administrators. The school creates and sustains a learning environment for students that nurtures a sense of caring and belonging. This is specifically accomplished through the Community of Caring program implemented at the school. Also, some teams are highly successful in creating this sense of caring and belonging. The school is encouraged to work to enhance all of the collaborative teams to work to create the sense of caring and belong in the smaller learning communities.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

The school has a program in place to engage parents and families as partners in the learning process. Despite near-heroic efforts, this program has had limited success. The school is committed to continue its efforts to enlist parents and families as educational partners.

The school is encouraged to further its efforts to develop working relationships with the feeder system, including both the elementary schools and the high school. Vertical teaming and articulation could enhance learning opportunities for students. The school is commended for its partnership with the Community College and use of college student volunteers.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

The Visiting Team commends the Eisenhower Junior High faculty for its organizational system and culture, which support school improvement and professional development. Teachers and staff members are willing to inquire about and participate in new programs to improve the learning environment for students.

The faculty and staff participate in Utah Behavior Initiative (UBI) training to improve the school climate through implementation of a behavioral management system. Opportunities are made available to the staff to attend professional development workshops.

Granite School District requires that all teachers participate in SIOP training to aid them in teaching LEP students. The teachers at Eisenhower Junior High have received this training. A professional library is available to teachers; testimonials confirm that it is being used, but actual data is lacking.

Professional development programs are designed to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge and skills by all staff members. These programs have included training for teachers in Integrated Thematic Instruction, teaching writing and reading, UBI, differentiated instruction, teaching on the block, and Brain-Based Learning. These programs focus on the knowledge and skills required to fulfill the performance expectations of teachers' roles, and contribute to the achievement of the school's goals for improvement.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

Eisenhower Junior High fosters an understanding of the change process among all those who have a stake in the work of the school. The school reaches out to the community through Project Reality, Strengthening Families, parenting nights, and the Parent Community Center. Although the efforts of the school are exemplary in trying to entice parents to become more a part their students' experience, parent involvement and attendance at these activities is very limited.

Student work is showcased during several evening activities during the year. Social activities are available to help students and parents with the transition into junior high school.

Support for the work of individuals and groups responsible for implementing school improvement initiatives was expressed in the following ways: The early-

release time on Fridays is used for teachers to communicate about school improvement. Each teacher serves on one of the Urban Learning Centers committees: Management and Governance, Teaching Support, Teaching, and Learning. The Math Department has been asked to develop a pre- and post-test for each level of math in order to properly place students at the beginning of the school year. One of the action plan goals is to improve students' numeracy skills, and plans are in place for teachers to receive more training.

A sustained commitment to continuous improvement and renewal is evident. The Visiting Team commends the faculty and staff on their proactive efforts to collaborate for problem solving. The staff has initiated discussion and collaborated to develop a school-wide discipline system.

Students are enrolled in an advisory class and taught social skills and reading strategies. Plans are in place to use the advisory period to keep teaching and modeling the DRSLs, and to support the other school-wide programs.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI

Eisenhower Junior High School is not seeking accreditation through the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools; therefore, this section was not completed. Most Utah public junior high/middle schools are not accredited through NAAS, but only by the USOE—it is their choice to join NAAS or not.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

The school action plan addresses the critical areas for follow-up as recommended by the Visiting Team. The Visiting Team also suggests that the school use the action plan as a working document and make adjustments as they learn more, and that the school develop a method of tracking movement toward the accomplishment of the goals. Many of the action steps address program implementation without being specific enough about the intended outcomes. Care must be taken to evaluate all programs for their effectiveness in improving student achievement. Periodic evaluations must be conducted along the way to ensure progress toward the goal. Goals of improving student achievement should be

attained by ensuring increased achievement for **all** students, not by increasing the achievement of a select few whose scores can then impact the average.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?*

The school community seems committed to reaching the goals of the action plan. The stakeholders seem comforted that the self-study and development of the action plan have unified the school's efforts toward improving student achievement. Care should be taken to maintain this focus and not be swayed by the enticement of program implementation. All decisions and efforts should be focused on attainment of the goals of the action plan. If the plan turns out to need revision, the same collaborative process should be used using appropriate data and research-based best practices.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the school-wide action plan appear to be?*

Some areas of monitoring of the accomplishments of the school-wide action plan appear to be well defined; others seem to be lacking. All goals and action steps should be "time-bound." Listing a time frame of "ongoing" does not give a specific time for evaluation and follow-up. In addition, listing "all employees" as responsible for an action step may ultimately leave no one responsible. Data must be collected and reviewed by someone, not "everyone," to ensure the effectiveness of the action step.

The Visiting Team recommends that the school review the action plan to determine whether the goals set are SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and Time-bound). Follow-up on the implementation and success of the action steps must be assigned to individuals or groups with a time-specific framework.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends Eisenhower Junior High School for its collaborative efforts in completing the self-study. The school has shown a willingness to describe the current reality, then describe what is ideal and define steps to move toward the ideal.

- The Visiting Team commends the school for its commitment to school improvement, as evidenced by professional willingness to implement programs such as Urban Learning Centers, Utah Behavior Initiative, and many grants.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for its efforts to meet the needs of early adolescent learners by adopting middle level philosophy and practices as described by the National Middle School Association.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for establishing a climate of shared vision and caring for one another.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that Eisenhower Junior High increase its use of data-driven decisions. This will require the effective collection and analysis of pertinent data to help the school's stakeholders know better who they are and evaluate whether what they are doing is effective.
- The Visiting Team recommends collaboration to clearly define learning outcomes for students in each course, develop of common assessments, and create interventions with which to respond when students don't learn. The school must be able to answer the three key questions: What should students know? How will we know when they know it? How will we respond when they don't? Answering these three questions in practice is the real work of the school.
- The Visiting Team recommends implementation of best practices specific to the block schedule. Students are yearning for relevant, hands-on learning activities. Students must be taught to access prior knowledge and make connections between subjects. The school must continue to explore and implement research-based, best instructional practices.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school extend the school community to include the family. We recognize the efforts already made; the school should confront the brutal fact that those efforts have been relatively ineffective. A level of trust must be developed between home and school to allow for family participation in education. Families must be helped to realize the important role they play in student success. Current practices must be evaluated and adjusted. The school must remain committed to the important work of including families in the education of their children despite the difficulty of the challenge.